

### This Winter's Song

And when I become a seagull  
I will fly to San Francisco  
where the oil is in the bay

and I will hang my heavy wings  
among the grabbing of the hands

and when they rescue me  
they'll wonder why  
my human eyes are so unglad.

If they remember me  
from some old love of sky  
before I learned the

endless way there is to die  
I may surprise their sympathy

the way I follow boats in fog  
the fatal way I follow  
hidden boats in fog.

-- Joyce Odam

Sacramento, CA

### Nights at La Petrella

The old man pushes hard up our thighs  
crouching wide in our dark  
we are lost in fists our heads  
arch back for the ceremony of knees  
and ornaments. We give ourselves

eight years to live in Cenci's stone rooms  
waiting too long for a stranger  
to love. The words  
quills deep to the back of the throat  
are the names we call into hands. Driven

to the ring finger we wet it  
with our tongues memory of hair  
on the well water  
the spread of seaweed on sand  
and waking,  
salt on our backs.